

it was with great trepidation that I took up my pen to make the few suggestions noted above on the method of the feeding of the Snipe, but I hope that they may be of some interest to the Members of our Union, many of whom are both sportsmen and naturalists, as they deal with a bird with which they are so familiar, and on which so much has already been written.

XXXV.—*On some rare Species of the Genus Larvivora from China.* By ERNST HARTERT, Ph.D.

(Plate XIII.)

EASY as it is to define the area of the Palæartic faunal region in some parts—as, for example, in the west, where the Sahara (especially as its interior is not yet zoologically explored) forms a most convenient boundary, and between Tibet and India, where the enormous chain of mountains called the Himalayas effects a natural separation,—this becomes very difficult in other countries, and, in fact, most intricate in China, where, at least in the more eastern parts, no sharp line of division exists at all. Every addition to our knowledge of the interior of China is therefore extremely welcome. Much has been lately added by Messrs. La Touche, Stryan, and Rickett, who have written valuable articles in the recent volumes of ‘The Ibis’; but much more remains to be done.

The mountain-chain known as the “Tsin-ling,” crossing China in a direction from west to east, is comparatively little explored. Nearly all we know of it is what has been effected by Bianchi and other Russian ornithologists, as the results of the explorations of Berezowski and other Russian travellers in Southern Kansu. It was therefore with great satisfaction that Mr. Rothschild acquired for the Tring Museum a collection offered by Mr. Alan Owston, which had been made on Mt. Tai-pai-shan in the Tsin-ling Mountains. This collection is very large, but sufficient attention has apparently not been paid to the small and inconspicuous forms which it contains; nevertheless, there are rare and even unknown species among them. A special interest is attached to

this collection, because the Tsin-ling Mountains appear to be the southern boundary of a number of Palearctic species.

The district is evidently rich in species of the genus *Larvivora*, a section—if separable at all, and certainly, so far, of doubtful limitation—of the genus *Erithacus*, as accepted in the ‘Catalogue of Birds.’

Three species of *Larvivora* are represented in this collection :—

1. LARVIVORA OBSCURA.

Larvivora obscura Berez. & Bianchi, Aves Exped. Potanin. Gansu, p. 97, pl. i. fig. 2 (1894: Kansu).

This rare bird was hitherto only known from the single adult male obtained by Berezowski. The present collection contains four males only, shot in May and July on Mt. Tai-pai-shan “halfway up.” There can be no doubt that the species belongs to the genus *Larvivora*. The female is not yet known.

2. LARVIVORA DAVIDI.

Calliope davidi Oustalet, Bull. Mus. Paris, 1892, p. 222; Arch. Nouv. Mus. Paris, Mém. ser. 4, iii. p. 271, pl. xi. (1901).

Eight specimens of this remarkable bird had been sent to the Paris Museum from Ta-t sien-lu in Szechuan. If the genera are separated, *L. davidi* doubtless belongs to *Larvivora* and not to *Calliope*, though it has a red throat. Our collection contains one male and one female of *L. davidi* from Tai-pai-shan, shot “halfway up” on July 6th and 10th.

Neither *L. obscura* nor *L. davidi*, though undoubtedly Palearctic forms, have been mentioned in Dresser’s ‘Manual of Palearctic Birds.’

3. LARVIVORA RUFICEPS. (Plate XIII.)

Larvivora ruficeps Hartert, Bull. B. O. Club, xix. p. 50 (Feb. 1907: Tai-pai-shan).

Of this fine new species three males and one female were obtained in July (10, 12, 13, 15. vii. 1905) “halfway up.”

I have described the male (*L. c.*) as follows :—

“ ♂ *ad.* Crown and hind-neck orange-rufous ; back and rump slate-grey, upper tail-coverts slaty-black. Quills slate-coloured, the edges of the outer webs slightly paler, those of the inner ones whitish-brown. Rectrices orange-rufous, middle pair with the apical third and the borders of the outer webs slaty-black. Lores, and a broad stripe under the eyes and encircling the throat, black ; throat white. Feathers below the black circle, as well as those on the sides of the throat and body, slaty-grey ; middle of the abdomen white. Under tail-coverts white with slate-grey edges. Thighs greyish. ‘Iris russet ; bill slate-black ; feet pinkish-buff.’ Wing about 79–81 mm., tail about 52–56, metatarsus 27, culmen 16–16.5.”

The female was shot on July 15th, and may be described as follows :—

♀ *ad.* Upper surface olive-brown, slightly more rufescent on the forehead and upper tail-coverts. Quills dark brown, edged with the colour of the back, rectrices similar, but slightly more brownish. Inner edges of the quills pale brownish. Under surface white, sides olivaceous, chest tinged with buff, feathers of the throat and breast fringed with olive-brown, thus producing a mottled or almost scaly appearance. Under tail-coverts edged with olive-brown. Wing 79 mm.

The female of *L. davidi* is nearly similar to that of *L. ruficeps*, but above of a deeper olive, with the upper tail-coverts more rufescent.

XXXVI.—Obituary.

PROFESSOR ALFRED NEWTON, F.R.S., and
MR. CHARLES AUGUSTUS WRIGHT.

I.—ALFRED NEWTON.

DEATH has been busy of late amongst the original members of the British Ornithologists' Union. Not to mention the name of Osbert Salvin, whom we lost some nine years ago, we do not forget the recent deaths of Edward Cavendish Taylor and Henry Baker Tristram ; and now we have to



LARVIVORA RUFICEPS.

West. Newman imp.